

BRIEF TO JOINT BOARD - HALTON LANDFILL EA - AUGUST 15, 1988

Name: Paul H. Rennick

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Home Location: Northwest of existing Burlington site and proposed site F Landfill, at the toe of the Niagara Escarpment, within the study area defined by Walker, Wright & Associates.

Historical Perspective:

My grandmother (maternal side - Spence/nee Atkinson) was born on the property now owned by Walter Johnson. My grandmother married a son of Captain William Spence, my great grandfather, previous owner of Woodhill, which was purchased from Sir Adam Ferguson around 1868 and remained in the Spence family until 1948. This historic property is now owned by Mr. Bob Elstone who has restored and is endeavouring to maintain Woodhill in its original architecture.

My grandmother, upon marriage in the 1890s, moved to the property now owned by Dr. Chris Walker. My mother was born in this house. My family (after a brief rental period during the 1930s) renovated the Walker house, where I spent much of my childhood and teenage years, until I left home for University.

Subsequently, my parents became too old to look after this heritage property and sold it to Dr. and Mrs. Walker. Part of that sale included an Option on four hectares of property that, if my parents or their heirs could sever, could be purchased back for the sum of \$1.00.

Eventually, after residing in Fredericton, Thunder Bay, Edmonton, etc., my wife and I decided to move home to my roots and I exercised the Option, after receiving the required approvals through the Region of Halton, Land Division Committee.

My wife and I decided to build our dream home on this property. We personally designed a passive, solar, 3400 square foot home, and contracted its construction in the early 1980s.

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This is a special and ecologically significant area that in my Canadian travels is second to none as a place to live. It is special in that it is a beautiful rural setting within 15 minutes of downtown Hamilton and 45 minutes from Toronto. It is also part of the Parkway Belt West Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, and the Halton Official Plan, etc., which restrict further development, so we had some assurance that investing our life savings in this venture was a reasonable thing to do. We now question that decision, with the spectre of yet another twenty-year landfill facing us.

The area is ecologically significant, including the lands from King Road to Waterdown Road and from the North Service Road to the Escarpment (my home stamping grounds), because the deep cut, wooded ravines contain Carolinian tree species, such as Sassafras, and a resident deer population, all within the City of Burlington.

In case you are in doubt, the area also has some archeological significance. As a child I collected Indian arrow and spear heads during the late 1940s. I kept them secure in a box until two years ago when one of my sons, as a school project, classified them, via the Brant Museum, and made up a display.

Concerns for Landfill:

As a child living in the Walker house, I certainly knew where the garbage dump was (Bayview). With an east wind, we could smell it and see the smoke when the dump was burning. Recently the Burlington Landfill is a noise impact. We live where we live partly for the solitude. The quiet is broken when heavy equipment is in operation, when we most desire winding down from our busy life --evenings and weekends. Especially annoying are the back up, high pitched sounds and the revving of motors which carries directly across the fields to our house.

In the winter, with the leaves of the deciduous trees fallen, we can see the Burlington Landfill, however, unless the proposed landfill site is higher, we do not expect to see it from our location.

Also, since our main access to Burlington and Toronto includes the North Service Road, we will be faced with garbage truck traffic for the next twenty years, if Site F is chosen.

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Selection Process:

It is my opinion that this confrontational EA process leading to this Hearing, should be condemned by you, Mr. Chairman, in your eventual Reasons for Decision. A process that pits area municipalities within the same Region against each other, rather than endeavouring to encourage cooperation, is very expensive, will leave many personal and political scars, and may not end up protecting the environment as fully as a more cooperative process.

The siting of public facilities, such as landfills, is more of a social and political problem than a technical battle. Recent studies and practice indicate that a more cooperative joint planning approach with the key parties has a greater chance of reaching an environmentally acceptable solution than the Decide/Announce/Defend process used in this situation.

Recommendation:

It is my opinion that the public interest would be better served in this case if a two-site approval were ordered by your Board. I could live with a smaller, more ecologically sensitive landfill at Site F - say three to four million tonnes, similar to the original NSP proposal, that protects the Sassafras woods, etc. - if I knew that fair play and political equity was evident and that a similar environmentally sensitive site was also approved in Milton. The two sites appear close in technical capability and both communities might have been more receptive if this approach had been one of the options from the beginning.

